

Brewster Kahle, 3:12 PM 2/9/93...,Message to Thinking Machines

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Date: Tue, 9 Feb 93 15:12:31 PST
To: brewster, duhring, barbara, morris
From: Brewster@wais.com (Brewster Kahle)
Subject: Message to Thinking Machines

what do you think?

to: dick@think.com
cc: danny@think.com

Dick,

All is going well in our new little company. We have enough contracts to grow for the next several months. We decided to postpone an announcement because we are not ready yet, but we are out selling contract work and starting to get the products together.

One of our first lessons is on follow-up. The Perot Systems deal worked great, but we have not gotten a follow-up contract going yet. The lessons learned...

The North Carolina WAIS Center is doing well; they got their funding, and are starting to extend the freeware. This dance will be an interesting one for us.

Congratulations on the Wall Street Journal article about the CM server at Columbia running the WAIS software, I hope that leads to more CM's going into this market.

We are basically building a Unix based WAIS server and making sure there are usable WAIS clients out in the field (either by freeware or by our polishing them or by helping other people write WAIS clients).

We are doing pretty well without stock or venture deals so we resemble a partnership. So far so good.

I would like to figure out a way for Thinking Machines and WAIS to work together where it makes sense. I think there is a short term part of this and a longer term way.

* One thing I mentioned before xmas was that we could share revenue on pieces that TMC wrote and we modify. The piece that I was thinking of was the Macintosh WAIStation that is currently being distributed for free in source code on the internet. We fixed some bugs, made extensions to it, and documented it so that it could be used more widely, but it is mostly the TMC code.

We are currently bundling this and the other freeware clients into deals as a freebee when we sell the server.

On the other hand, there are some people that want that piece separately. Such a deal is in the works (but not final yet): The Interop trade show wants to put it on the CDROM that they give out at the show, and they may want to put some of there info on a WAIS server. This is only a pilot, but we are very excited. At \$2/CD and 2500 CD's, we will be getting \$5000 from them for this deal. We would like to credit Thinking Machines on the startup screen (but explicitly avoid liability).

As this is a financial start between WAIS Inc and Interop, this can used as the same thing for us and TMC.

I was thinking of splitting our revenue for the direct sales of the Mac client. I realize this means you will only get \$2500, which is not very much (but it is actually pretty helpful for us).

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* On the longer term, we would like to port the software to the CM5 when a customer appears. I think of this as TMC finally finding the partner it was looking for in the information retrieval area. This will continue to make the CM be a leader in high end WAIS servers.

For instance, Columbia is writing proposals on getting a CM5; they are worried about TMC's commitment to building the software.

Also, we talk with customers that are interested in how to scale up. Our story is that our software works on the 1-20 processor systems now, and if you need more, then the CM5 can get into the 1000's of processors and disks.

Does this make sense? Do you have time now to deal with it? If you would like to do something formal, this is a start at it. In any case, we are moving ahead, and I hope that more Columbia deals result from TMC's work in this area. If you would like to reach me, I am at 415-617-0440.

-brewster